



BACK



SEND TO A FRIEND



FEEDBACK

Business Expo told to keep up with changes

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Technology, science, health care, publishing and just about everything else is changing incredibly rapidly, a speaker told a Red Deer audience Wednesday.

Jim Carroll's message to those attending the ninth annual Business Expo at the Red Deer Lodge was to be up to speed as far as change is concerned, and to be on the lookout for the business opportunities it creates.

Carroll is described as an internationally recognized futurist, trends and innovation expert.

He is based in Ontario where he works from the home he shares with his wife and two sons.

A self-confessed techno-nerd, Carroll keeps himself up to date on what's happening, in part through the travelling he does in his speaking career and in part through the very technology that's helping change things —



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computers and the Internet.

As an example of how fast things are changing, Carroll related a story in which while he was cleaning up some 35-mm film, one of his sons asked him what it was.

Carroll has used a digital camera for years and his son had never seen film before.

New knowledge is occurring so rapidly that 65 per cent of pre-school children today will work in jobs that don't yet exist, Carroll said, quoting an Australian study.

Another study found that half of what today's first-year students are learning, whether they are in the trades or at university, will have become obsolete or changed by the time they graduate.

The speed at which science and information is spread is what is driving the world today, said Carroll.

"We all have to learn to do things fast, we have to learn how to respond faster," he said.

Alberta's big issue is the lack of skilled people.

"How do we hire people? It's only going to get worse," said Carroll, citing statistics that once the baby boom generation begins leaving the workforce, by 2016 six people will be departing the work force for every one coming in.

He quoted a study that indicated more than 50 per cent of people believe being self-employed is more secure than being an employee.

Carroll said 67 per cent of those surveyed in an Irish study were already looking for another job on their first day at a new position.

A quote from his latest book says: "Innovative organizations anticipate obvious future trends and begin to shift fundamental assumptions and attitudes in order to advance change."

Even the world of book publishing has changed, he said. Earlier books of his were published and distributed to book stores in the traditional way, with Carroll getting 15 per cent of the sales. Now, he sells via Internet and Amazon.

He may not sell as many books, but he ends up with 90 per cent from each sale.

Amazon owns Booksurge, a company through which any author can publish. Booksurge prints out as many copies as a specific order requires.

"Anybody can be an author today," said Carroll.

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Another trend he talked about was that one result of the explosion of knowledge has been the fragmentation of skills, in particular in the health field.

There is so much new knowledge that there is more and more specialization.

That in turn has created a new profession, the hospitalist.

A hospitalist is someone who understands all the specialties and guides a patient through the system.

As more new technology comes on stream, such as the ability to remotely monitor the security of your home and even its thermostat, the successful people will be those who see the opportunities, such as snagging the distribution rights of such inventions.

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